



THE THEMBISA TRUST

**Grassroots support
in South Africa**

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**Thembisa has
no political affiliation**

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about us



join us



projects



funding



events

2013 Focus: iThemba

(see p.5)



Walk and Barbecue

**Thembisa Trust 25th anniversary event,
Sunday 28th July 2013**

(see p.3)



*Children at an Mama Ntombi's Community Projects (MNCP) club
are delighted with their new school shoes.* (see p.4)

‘Throw a stone’ to celebrate Thembisa’s 25th birthday!

Tonia Cope Bowley, Thembisa Trust Co-founder

When Thembisa started up 25 years ago the situation in South Africa was bleak indeed. Nelson Mandela was in prison. Apartheid was in full swing and sanctions affected all citizens. It was then that Thembisa got going with the aim of helping some at the very bottom of the pile. And Thembisa has done just that for 25 years.

South Africa has moved on. What has not changed is the poverty and unemployment. Can Thembisa eliminate these giant problems? Of course not! But we can do something for someone. When we do something for someone it is like throwing a stone into a pond. It is unpredictable as to just how far the ripples will reach.

Some of the projects Thembisa helped get off the ground have rippled out beyond all expectation. Take for example the Bethesda Arts Foundation in the Eastern Cape. In the late 1990s Bethesda was started by one far-sighted person shocked by the poverty of the indigenous people. Today Bethesda thrives, providing training and education. The artists' work generates income and lives are changed as their dreams are realised. Another success story is that of the Bonginkosi Pre-School in Kwa Zulu / Natal. Thembisa's 'stone', thrown in 2004, enlisted the participation of Kennington Overseas Aid, who raised a substantial sum to provide a safe school building. In 2011 it was my privilege and joy to visit this thriving school and meet the excellent staff and happy children.

Today Thembisa is 'throwing stones' into the pools of two new projects – iThemba and Mama Ntombi's Community Projects (see pages 4–5).

Thembisa longs to become more effective in spreading hope to Southern Africa's poorest. It would help to have a larger pool of regular donors. As we wrote recently: Our challenge for our **25th YEAR** is to find **25 NEW DONORS** who will commit to giving Thembisa £5 or £10 monthly via direct debit.

If this is a 'stone' you can throw please throw it. Or you may inspire someone else to take up this challenge.

Thank you for your support over the years.

Yabonga gakula

(Zulu: Together let us keep on going – and growing!)



Celebrate our 25th year



Join us for our walk and barbecue on Sunday 28 July 2013

- ▶ A long walk starting at 10 am
- ▶ A short walk starting at 3 pm
- ▶ A barbecue from 4.30 to 8 pm at Ferndale in Tiddington
- ▶ Further details nearer the time!

We are hoping to present **'An evening with Janet Suzman'** in Oxford in late October/November, but this is subject to Janet's acting commitments. We'll keep you posted if/when a date can be fixed!

Anniversary challenge

Thembisa's 25th anniversary challenge is to find 25 new donors who will commit to giving Thembisa £5 or £10 monthly via direct debit. Can you help?

Can you help us grow Thembisa's membership? Please talk to any South Africans or anyone who may be interested in supporting those in need this way.

Could you host your own Thembisa party/lunch/tea/barbecue/DVD or book-swapping evening, with the proceeds going to Thembisa? Let us know if you would like any newsletters or bookmarks.

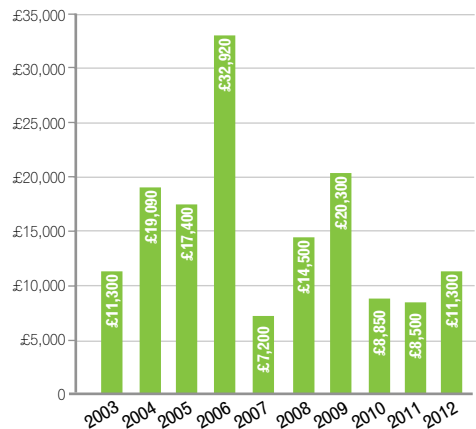
25 years of Thembisa

Thembisa's aim is to give a chance in life to some of South Africa's disadvantaged people by working in partnership with grassroots development projects.

Thembisa was founded by Stephen and Tonia Bowley in 1988. The first grant was £300 for a water tank for a school in the Valley of a Thousand Hills, Natal.

Since then Thembisa has funded over 70 projects including community projects (e.g. orphanages, food kitchens), income generation schemes, and education and training.

Project funding amounted to £37,578 from 1988 to 1996; £88,965 from 1997 to 2002; and £151,360 from 2003 to 2012.



- ▶ Some 2012 funding will be decided in 2013.
- ▶ The 2006 total included a grant of £21,220 from Kennington Overseas Aid to Thembisa for the Bongikosi Pre-School.



New Project

Changing lives in squatter camps – MNCP

Informal settlements (squatter camps) in South Africa's nine largest cities contain 4.4 million people – 10% of South Africa's population. About 23% of the residents are without adequate shelter, basic sanitation and water supply. Shack fires, security risks and health hazards are added complications.

'Changing the world one smiling child at a time' is the motto of Mama Ntombi's Community Projects (MNCP), working in two Pietermaritzburg informal settlements – Jika Joe and Matison. The aim is to change the status and self esteem of vulnerable children so that they become achievers in life.

Many of these children are orphaned or being cared for by grandparents or in child-headed households, due to the ravages of HIV. Some cannot afford the fees to attend school, whilst others are involved in drugs and prostitution to earn money. Children as young as five years old have to take care of younger siblings, as parents go out to seek employment.

MNCP volunteers run a Sunday afternoon club to teach 300 children life skills. At the end the children enjoy a nutritious meal together. For many, this is probably the only decent meal they get for the week. This is clear from the way that

they hoard food and consume it so ravenously. Feeding the 300 children each Sunday afternoon costs £70.

The recession has hit MNCP and they need our help to keep these worthwhile projects going. Recently Thembisa sent MNCP £500. Now 50 delighted children own their very own school shoes!

The children are provided with a basic food hamper for the rest of the week. The MNCP programme also includes cultural and sporting opportunities to help keep kids off the streets; mentoring and developing 20 older children as leaders to help in community activities; providing awareness workshops on combating HIV and substance abuse; and where possible supporting children, especially those in child-headed households, e.g. by assessing grants/referring them to social workers. When possible MNCP buys school uniforms and stationery for some of the children, such as Nosiphso, aged 15, who wrote to thank them: 'My future is now shining in front of my eyes.' Nosiphso lives with her granny who is also looking after 13 other grandchildren.



Focus Project



iThemba Community Projects

iThemba Community Projects operates in Mpumaza near Pietermaritzburg. Its 50-60,000 inhabitants face problems such as a lack of education and unemployment. Some 5,000 orphans are cared for by relatives or are in child-headed households.

iThemba (motto: 'Plotting hope together') works on the principle of 'Give a man a fish and you feed him for one day; teach a man to fish and you'll feed him for life.' iThemba tries to empower people (especially children and young people) to become the future of the community, and be the solution to the many problems that exist.

Having started as an informal job-creation scheme in 2003, iThemba was registered as a Trust in 2007. Activities now include a life skills programme to over 500 children weekly, 8 crèches, 8 teacher training workshops a year, 2 holiday camps, job creation, and a sustainable nutrition programme at 15 schools. There are 14 full-time and 8 part-time staff members and more than 70 volunteers, many helping on a weekly basis.

A local chief was so impressed with iThemba's work that he donated ground for a permanent base, now zoned for a preschool. Preschool education provides children under 6 with vital developmental opportunities. At the weekly children's

clubs, iThemba fieldworkers act as positive role models for the children. The nutrition programme trains teachers at schools on how to manage a sustainable garden which helps provide vital nutrients for the children.

- ▶ £3 a month allows iThemba to teach a child important life skills weekly
- ▶ £4 will buy one bag of cement or lime to help build a new preschool
- ▶ £5 will buy one roof sheet for a new preschool
- ▶ £10 monthly for 2 years will enable iThemba to develop a sustainable vegetable garden to support the feeding of more than 10 children each year.



Tonia Cope Bowley visited iThemba in August 2012 and was immensely impressed by this well run yet needy project. iThemba will be Thembisa's special focus project during 2013.



Projects update



► A quilt designed and made jointly by Bethesda workers.

Bethesda Arts Centre

The Bethesda Arts Centre in Nieu-Bethesda, Eastern Cape, continues to train artists and provide work for the residents of this impoverished town. Two of the group are now computer literate and keep control of all the cash that comes in from sales and from the restaurant. Three of the group now run the restaurant (which earns great compliments from guests) by themselves.

Bethesda has converted their big studio into a dedicated quilt gallery with nine large quilts depicting San Bushman mythology. Every morning begins with a 'clean' (alcohol-free) meeting.

Chishawasha Orphans' project, Zimbabwe

Maggie Norton, our contact at this project which supports orphans with a weekly life skills club, food parcels, and other help, reported that our funds have been used to pay for school fees, bilharzia medication, and to support the growing of food at a nearby orphanage. Some funds have also gone to a mentoring scheme to help older destitute children who haven't attended school at all and cannot read.

Maggie described a talk that she and some ladies gave at a local school: 'At least 8 girls in Form 4 had fallen pregnant and 4 of those were already HIV positive. We went twice and the second time we asked them to write down questions regarding relationships, sex, STDs etc. It was heartbreaking to read

some of their questions revealing so many issues. We addressed some of them in our last talk and have been asked to go back to carry on.'



► At the weekly club, orphans learn basic life skills.

Projects update



Bonginkosi self-help project – more than blankets!

Thembisa has been funding the Sweetwaters Blanket project, helping unemployed ladies – many of them caring for orphaned grandchildren – to earn an income by crocheting blankets. In fact the Bonginkosi Self-help project, run by volunteers from local churches, cares for about 200 people in Sweetwaters in many different ways. Other income-generating activities include crocheting hats from waste plastic bags, candle making, hand sewing embroidery, machine sewing of school uniforms and clothes, brick making, and agricultural projects. People are helped to grow food from donated seeds. Educational and medical need are also met.

Thembisa's grants have enabled the project to subsidise children's school fees, buy medicines, and keep the project's vehicle running.



► The photos show two members of the group with their produce grown from seed.

Khazimula Children's Shelter

Khazimula, in the KwaZulu/Natal midlands, houses traumatised children and victims of abuse, caring for them in a secure environment and trying to reintegrate them with their families. Sometimes this isn't possible, and Khazimula's application to be recognised as a Child Care Centre has now been approved. This means they can provide permanent accommodation for those children who cannot be sent back to their families.

The ablution facilities have now been upgraded, using two donated containers to house toilets and showers. The most pressing further need is funding for a social worker.

Charles Swaisland Memorial Fund

Thank you to all who responded to our mailing of October 2012, advising you of the death of Charles Swaisland, a much loved and respected 'pillar' of Thembisa (see the Thembisa website for an obituary). The Charles Swaisland Memorial Fund received £2800. These funds have been distributed to iThemba Community projects and the Warmth Feeding Scheme.

Khazimula provides a nurturing family environment which can completely change the course of abused children's lives. One young man (an 'old boy' of Khazimula), Wandile, wrote as follows:

'I thank Khazimula a lot for taking me out of the cave of ignorance and revealing to me the light of life and education.'

You can see Wandile in a video at www.youtube.com/watch?v=eXD0tJoNvfk&feature=youtu.be (For obvious reasons, the faces of children currently living at Khazimula can't be shown).



Project funding 2012^a

Project / Organisation	Location	Total
AELTC (African Enterprise Leadership Training Centre) Leadership training throughout South Africa	Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal	£500
Bethesda Arts Centre Skills training, employment	Nieu Bethesda, Eastern Cape	£1,000
Masikhulisane Trust Alleviation of poverty through job creation	Grahamstown, Eastern Cape	£1,500
Warmth^a (War against Malnutrition, TB and Hunger) Community based nutrition project	Cape Town, Western Cape	£1,900
Bonginkosi Self-help Project Blanket making and other skills	Sweetwaters, KwaZulu-Natal	£1,000
Pre School Places For needy children	Grahamstown area, Eastern Cape	£1,000
Chishawasha Orphans Includes provision of care and teaching life skills	Zimbabwe	£1,500
Khazimula Children's Project^b Shelter and schooling for vulnerable children.	Lidgetton, KwaZulu-Natal	£500
GADRA (Grahamstown Area Distress Relief Association) Combatting poverty and promoting dignity and independence for blind and partially sighted people	Grahamstown, Eastern Cape	£1,000
iThemba Community Projects^a Life training, crèches, preschools, sustainable nutrition, employment opportunities	Mpumzuza, KwaZulu/Natal	£1,400
Mama Ntombi's Community Projects Supporting vulnerable children in two informal settlements	Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu/Natal	£500
	Total	£11,500

^a Each of these grants included £1400 from the Charles Swaisland Memorial Fund.
^b Some funding for 2012 is still to be allocated.

A REMINDER Admin funds come from membership dues.
 Donations are passed on in their entirety to projects.



Thembisa is now on Facebook

We joined the social media revolution and now have a Facebook page. Search for Thembisa Trust. Please 'like' us so we can increase awareness of what we do!

Email addresses

Please remember to send your email address to contact@thembistrust.org (together with your own name!). You will only receive occasional relevant news to keep you up-to-date. Your email will not be passed to any third party.

Raise funds when shopping online

Easyfundraising has made it even easier to raise money for Thembisa at no cost to you. Visit <http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/panel>, put 'Thembisa Trust' in the search box, and register.

Just press the Easyfundraising button which will be added to the top of your screen whenever you buy something online at any of 2000+ registered retailers, and the retailer will make a donation to Thembisa. We've raised £79 so far at no cost to us!